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**MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS**  
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

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**SOUTHEAST VALLEY FOCUS GROUP RESULTS**

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is developing a new Regional Transportation Plan for the MAG region. As part of this effort, MAG conducted a series of focus groups to identify and document transportation issues and concerns. The focus groups were held throughout the Valley to capture ideas from geographically and ethnically diverse groups of participants. The findings will assist MAG in identifying regional values, goals, and objectives that will guide the development of the Regional Transportation Plan.

The format of the Focus Groups included an opportunity for interactive discussion among participants, as well as a voting exercise that provided insight on priorities. To help structure the process, the discussions were organized into five topics areas. The topics included:

- ✕ Demographic and Social Change;
- ✕ The New Economy;
- ✕ Environmental and Resource Issues;
- ✕ Land Use and Urban Development; and
- ✕ Transportation and Technology.

Participants were encouraged to provide their own issues and concerns that related to each topic, both individually and in a round-table discussion. The responses received were documented in essentially a “verbatim” format so that the message intended by the participant was accurately conveyed.

The results of the **Southeast Valley Focus Group** are attached. This material has been divided into three parts as follows:



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**Part I. Key Focus Group Issues:** In Part I, the key issues identified at the Southeast Valley Focus Group are listed by topic area. These issues are those voted by the participants to be the top two concerns in each topic area. Due to ties, certain topics may have more than two issues listed.

**Part II. Comprehensive Listing of Participant Issues:** In Part II, all the issues identified by the individual participants are listed. These issues have been grouped by topic area.

**Part III. Roundtable Discussion Comments:** In Part III, the results from a roundtable discussion are listed. These comments were recorded when all the focus group attendees participated in a general discussion of issues prior to voting on the top issues in each topic area.

If you have any questions or comments on the focus group process or the attached results, please contact Roger Herzog, MAG, at 602-254-6300 or [rherzog@mag.maricopa.gov](mailto:rherzog@mag.maricopa.gov).



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## SOUTHEAST VALLEY FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

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### PART I. KEY FOCUS GROUP ISSUES

The participants of the Southwest Valley Focus Group were given the opportunity to vote on their top two issues in each of the five topic areas. The two issues receiving the most votes are listed under each topic. Due to ties, certain topics may have more than two issues listed.

#### *DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE PRIMARY ISSUES*

- x Neighborhood planning strategies are needed.
- x Increased demand for public transit services.

#### *THE NEW ECONOMY PRIMARY ISSUES*

- x The high-tech jobs will require strategic planning of neighborhoods to keep the driving distance short.
- x Alternative transportation modes essential.

#### *ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES PRIMARY ISSUES*

- x [Need] open space preservation.
- x Establish vehicle emission test stations in areas where testing is required.

#### *LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT PRIMARY ISSUES*

- x [Need] regional transit planning.
- x [Need] open space -recreation areas.

#### *TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY PRIMARY ISSUES*

- x Plan transportation corridors now, procure right-of-way.



- ✕ Rail, bus and bike alternatives need pre-planning.



## PART II. COMPREHENSIVE LISTING OF PARTICIPANT ISSUES

The following is a comprehensive listing of the issues that individual participants of the Southeast Valley Focus Group identified as their concerns under each topic.

### DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE ISSUES

- x Employment off site three - five days per week for electronic and tech use.
- x Social services increase as greater portion of population becomes eminent.
- x Aging population requires alternative transportation support.
- x True urban lifestyle comes into play & density produces safety needs.
- x Employment centers vs. distance (comments).
- x Increased demand for public transit services.
- x Increased demand for air travel.
- x Cultural changes – language.
- x Neighborhoods aging.
- x Need for senior housing.
- x Need for feeling safe.
- x The Lord said, “There is plenty and to share. We must use what we are given appropriately. Only the envious say we cannot any longer use our resources.” Who do you believe, man or God?
- x Need work-home relationships/community-driven work where you live.
- x Affordable transportation – to go from affordable housing to work areas.
- x Hospitals – medical care centrally located within communities.
- x Rising income and population will demand more use of car/freeway.
- x Older drivers may require change in traffic system design for safety and use of alternative transportation such as bus/dial-a-ride.



**DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE ISSUES (CONTINUED)**

- x Increased diversity of population may attract and economize the use of alternative mode of transportation – light rail.
- x Safer bus loading zones past intersection- backs up traffic into intersection and is danger to oncoming traffic.
- x Tie into demographics of contiguous counties - plan coordination and consolidation with transportation needs (i.e. East/West corridor Hwy 60).
- x Higher birth rates are not inevitable according to many available studies.
- x Senior age has already reached its limitations.
- x Safety emphasis relies on continuing road developments.
- x The shift from transit to cars as income rises not applicable to present development.
- x Minority population may grown from one in four (2000), to two in five (2040):
  - Increased demand for public transit services;
  - Immigrant population will have more cultural ties due to enhanced communication and multi-lingual media;
  - Higher birth rates may increase school age population faster than projected;
  - Increased need for affordable housing; and
  - As incomes rise, shift from transit to cars.
- x Seniors will live longer and have greater wealth:
  - Increased need for alternatives to driving, in particular door-to-door services;
  - Increased emphasis on safety;
  - Bus stops immediately beyond intersection which, creates a major safety problem; and
  - Older driver of the future will drive more than today's driver.



### THE NEW ECONOMY ISSUES

- x Home-based business increase -need for personal transportation decrease.
- x Work force contracted out, rather than in-house.
- x Being on the edge of economic needs.
- x [Need] training for all job levels.
- x Providing the right sites to attract corporate headquarters.
- x Providing for office/residential land uses – live where you work.
- x Retraining the workers from the farms.
- x Proper job training or retraining as economy changes.
- x Balance of high to low paying employment – not all call centers.
- x Congestion to airport/air traffic as well, will need this to be co-mingled with general plan.
- x Home-based work force will increase to balance the congestion.
- x The lack of a corporate/financial district infringes on establishment of corporate headquarters.
- x The linking of factory and farm produces unusable stats.
- x Offshore manufacturing is a recognized national problem, where no answers are presently available.

### ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES ISSUES

- x Fund air quality mandates from MAG which impact outside MAG – non-attainment area.
- x Use “balanced” approach when evaluating/dealing with open space and development.
- x Destruction of environment through uncontrolled growth.
- x Lack of recreational areas.
- x [Need to improve the] poor air quality.
- x Lack of water to sustain area and growth.
- x [Need] air quality improvements.







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**ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES ISSUES (CONTINUED)**

- x Increased recreational opportunities.
- x [Need] growth & land use planning.
- x Cleaning up environmental problem areas.
- x [Need to improve] water/power resources.
- x Increased population/roadways cause and affect air quality.
- x Problem with long-term good-quality water supply.
- x Adversely effect open space and recreational opportunity.
- x Many environmental concepts are based on lies. Until you begin working with the truth you will make no progress.
- x Coordinate with conservation studies presently underway.

**LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT ISSUES**

- x [Need to implement] alternative modes of transportation.
- x [Need to develop] home/work centers [that are closer] together.
- x Controlled growth –protection of desert.
- x Concern= municipal authority restrictions.
- x Light rail & hard line should be pre-defined.
- x Infrastructure and transportation system upgrade.
- x Provide regional systems planning for open space and provide parks, hiking trails, linear system of parks.
- x [Need] transit-related recreational.
- x Freeways are great, buses are great, rail is great, and it all costs billions of dollars.
- x Bike lanes are the cheapest improvement you can make.
- x Plan transportation corridors now, procure right-of-way.
- x Make sure a regional perspective is really a regional perspective.





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**LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT ISSUES (CONTINUED)**

- x Regional land use planning.
- x Regional open space planning.
- x Regional tax structure for all communities.
- x Regional planning for school system construction and funding.
- x Existing infrastructure upgrades on a regional planning level.
- x Decentralize: Regional airport located in Casa Grande with high-speed transportation to metropolitan centers. Light rail from there.
- x Land use, regional recreation system are all compromised by antiquated sales of State Land – revised constitution badly needed.
- x [Need] future planning of transit corridors.
- x Using technology in new methods to more people.
- x New methods of work from home/community.
- x Energy efficiency – away from fossil fuels.
- x [Need] new methods of delivery of services.
- x Make constitutional changes allowing state land for ROW based on increased value from transportation corridors.
- x Will require ITS to be part of the system.
- x Air transport/airport planning with regional and local airports.
- x My office is in my home, between fax, phone, Internet and email I have very little need to leave home on business.
- x Congestion and higher counts, demand public transportation alternatives.
- x Increase in air travel.
- x Need for rail connections to employment centers.
- x Need for rail connections to major transportation centers (airports).
- x Increase in air freight and need for delivery method.
- x Need for more mass transit servicing more areas.





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**LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT ISSUES (CONTINUED)**

- x Create a regional airport between Tucson and Phoenix – High-speed rail in median on I-10.
- x Commercial air transport to develop at other ports of entry rather than personal air service.
- x Congestion will mean flexible hours for workforce.
- x Freight and truck delivery to be shifted to off hours.
- x The “fairly stable” commute times contribute to environmental (air) problems.
- x How will new developments in auto-truck construction change congestion?

**PART III. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION COMMENTS**

The following are issues that were identified by participants in an informal, roundtable discussion held during the Southeast Valley Focus Group, regarding future transportation in the Valley.

- x Bicycle lanes are the cheapest improvement you can make.
- x Work with multi-modal means of transportation (cars, bikes, etc.).
- x Plan future corridors now! Get around state land problems.
- x Balance growth in open space.
- x “Real” regional perspectives.
- x Need another full service road (Apache Junction).
- x Not considering airport uses.
- x No coalition between issues.
- x In multi-county planning – don’t lose perspective on local needs.
- x Public process needs to be reviewed – are comments being heard?
- x Come up with regional hubs (work, entertainment, social, school).
- x Need alternative transportation options (besides car).



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**PART III. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION COMMENTS (CONTINUED)**

- x Connect mass transit/rail all over Valley.
- x More regional approach to planning.
- x Don't hear a lot of coordination with other planning – (transportation, etc.) efforts.
- x Don't just focus on Central Phoenix – outlying areas are growing too.
- x Problems exist all over county.
- x Regional activity centers to really serve all over.
- x Connections to outlying areas.

